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AMAR CHITRA KATHA

No. 379 Rs. 5/-

Mahabharata - 26

PANIC IN THE KAURAVA CAMP

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AMAR CHITRA KATHA

MAHABHARATA

Veda Vyasa's Epic on the Bharata race was first recited in public by his disciple Vaishampayana at the behest of the ageless seer Vyasa himself.

The recital took place in the august presence of King Janamejaya—great grandson of Vyasa—and the many learned sages who had assembled for Janamejaya's Sarpa Satra (a 12-year-long snake sacrifice).

The twenty-fifth session of our rendering of Veda Vyasa's epic, the Mahabharata, described how the Pandavas and Draupadi spent the thirteenth year of their exile under various disguises at the court of Virata, King of the Matsyas. Yudhishthira was the courtier Kanka, Bheema the cook Ballava, Arjuna the eunuch Brihannala, Nakula the ostler Granthika, Sahadeva the cowherd Tantipala and Draupadi a Sairandhri (maid-servant). Bheema later killed the mighty Keechaka who tried to molest Draupadi. The end of the thirteenth year saw Duryodhana worried at the prospect of the Pandavas successfully completing their term of exile and returning to claim the kingdom.

*

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Mahabharata – 26

PANIC IN THE KAURAVA CAMP

O MONARCH, KING DURYODHANA SENT SPIES IN ALL DIRECTIONS TO SPOT THE EXILED PANDAVAS AND BRING NEWS OF THEM.

"AFTER SEARCHING FAR AND WIDE, THE SPIES CAME BACK TO HASTINAPURA AND REPORTED TO DURYODHANA —

O LORD, WE HAVE SEARCHED FOR THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE PANDAVAS IN THE DEEP WOODS, BUT FOUND NO CLUE TO THE PATH THEY TOOK.

FOR SOME TIME WE ALSO FOLLOWED THE TRACKS OF THEIR CHARIOTEERS, BUT WE COULD NOT MAKE OUT WHERE THE PANDAVA BROTHERS HAVE GONE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THEY HAVE BEEN KILLED.

BUT, MY LORD, WE ALSO HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS FOR YOU. THE WICKED KEECHAKA OF THE MATSYA KINGDOM HAS BEEN KILLED BY SOME INVISIBLE GANDHARVAS.

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INSTRUCT US NOW, O KING, ON WHAT WE MUST DO NEXT.

A THOUGHTFUL DURYODHANA THEN ADDRESSED HIS COURTIERS.

THE THIRTEENTH YEAR IS COMING TO AN END AND IF THE SONS OF PANDU REMAIN UNDISCOVERED THEY WILL HAVE FULFILLED THEIR PLEDGE. THE ANGRY PANDAVAS WILL THEN UNDOUBTEDLY BECOME A SOURCE OF UNHAPPINESS FOR THE KAURAVAS.

SO TRY AND FIND THEM AT THE EARLIEST SO THAT THEY WILL HAVE TO SUPPRESS THEIR ANGER AND GO INTO EXILE FOR ANOTHER TWELVE YEARS. THIS WILL REMOVE ALL CONFLICTS AND PROBLEMS FROM MY KINGDOM FOR A LONG TIME.

DESPATCH ABLER AND MORE CUNNING SPIES, O KING. LET THEM MAKE DISCREET ENQUIRIES WITH PEOPLE IN CITIES, PILGRIM SPOTS, ASHRAMAS AND ROYAL COURTS. LET THEM ALSO SEARCH IN JUNGLES AND CAVES.

"THEN DUHSHASANA ADDED —

LET US DO AS KARNA SAYS. MAYBE THEY LIVE SKILFULLY CONCEALING THEMSELVES, OR PERHAPS THEY HAVE GONE TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OCEAN.

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* DRONACHARYA'S BROTHER-IN-LAW

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"BUT DURYODHANA WAS TROUBLED IN MIND.

KEECHAKA AND HIS BROTHERS HAVE BEEN SLAIN. I BELIEVE THIS IS THE WORK OF NONE OTHER THAN BHEEMA, AND SAIRANDHRI, I BELIEVE, IS DRAUPADI. WE SHOULD NOW LEAD AN EXPEDITION TO MATSYA AND LOOK FOR THE PANDAVAS THERE.

"KING SUSHARMA OF TRIGARTA PROPOSED ——

THE MATSYA ARMY, LED BY KEECHAKA, HAS GIVEN ME TREMENDOUS TROUBLE IN THE PAST. HE HAS BEEN KILLED BY GANDHARVAS NOW.

I SUGGEST THAT THE KAURAVAS SHOULD NOW INVADE THE PROSPEROUS MATSYA KINGDOM FROM THE NORTH. WE SHALL PLUNDER ITS WEALTH AND CATTLE, CONQUER IT AND DIVIDE IT AMONG OURSELVES.

"KARNA WAS PLEASED WITH SUSHARMA'S WORDS.

THE OPPORTUNITY IS FAVOURABLE AND THERE IS THE PROMISE OF GAIN FOR US. LET US MARSHALL OUR FORCES AND PLUNDER THE MATSYA KINGDOM. WE NEED HAVE NO FEAR OF THE PANDAVAS, FOR THEY ARE NOW WITHOUT WEALTH, ARMED STRENGTH AND POWER.

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"AGREEING TO THE ADVICE, DURYODHANA INSTRUCTED DUHSHASANA.

GET OUR FORCES IN ARRAY RIGHT NOW AND PREPARE TO MARCH TOWARDS THE MATSYA KINGDOM.

LET THE TRIGARTAS LED BY SUSHARMA PROCEED FIRST AND SEIZE KING VIRATA'S CATTLE. THE KAURAVA ARMY WILL SET OUT ON THE FOLLOWING DAY.

THEN, O LORD, SUSHARMA AND THE TRIGARTAS MARCHED TOWARDS THE MATSYA KINGDOM AND SEIZED THE CATTLE OF THE LAND. A DAY LATER THE KAURAVA ARMY ATTACKED THE NORTHERN END.

MEANWHILE ON KEECHAKA'S DEATH, KING VIRATA HAD BEGUN TO REGARD YUDHISHTHIRA WITH GREAT RESPECT AND HAD PINNED GREAT HOPES ON HIM.

"SO ONE DAY WHEN KING VIRATA'S COURT WAS IN SESSION—

O KING, THE SOLDIERS OF TRIGARTA ARE LIFTING OUR CATTLE BY A HUNDRED AND THOUSAND HEAD. PLEASE RESCUE THEM AT ONCE.

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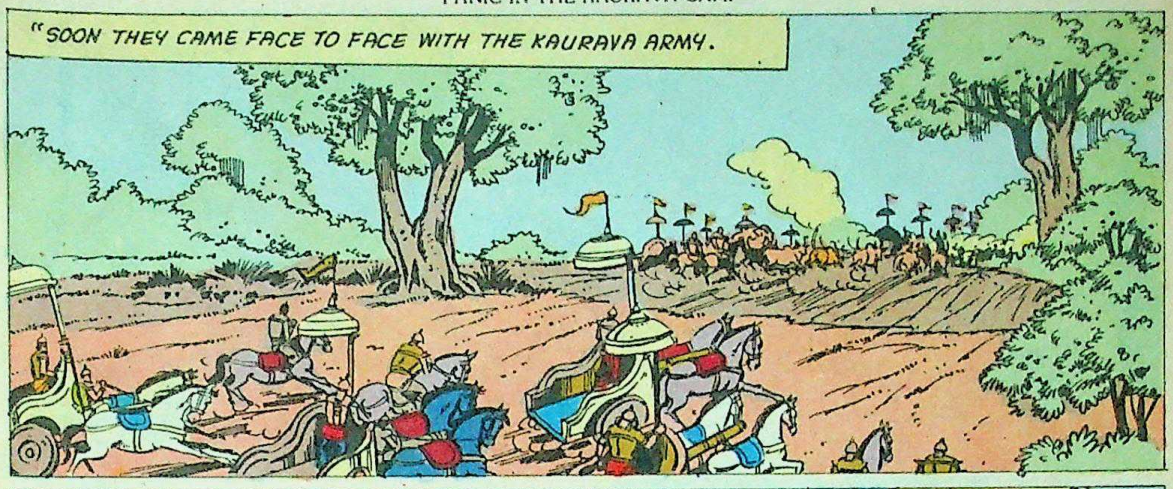

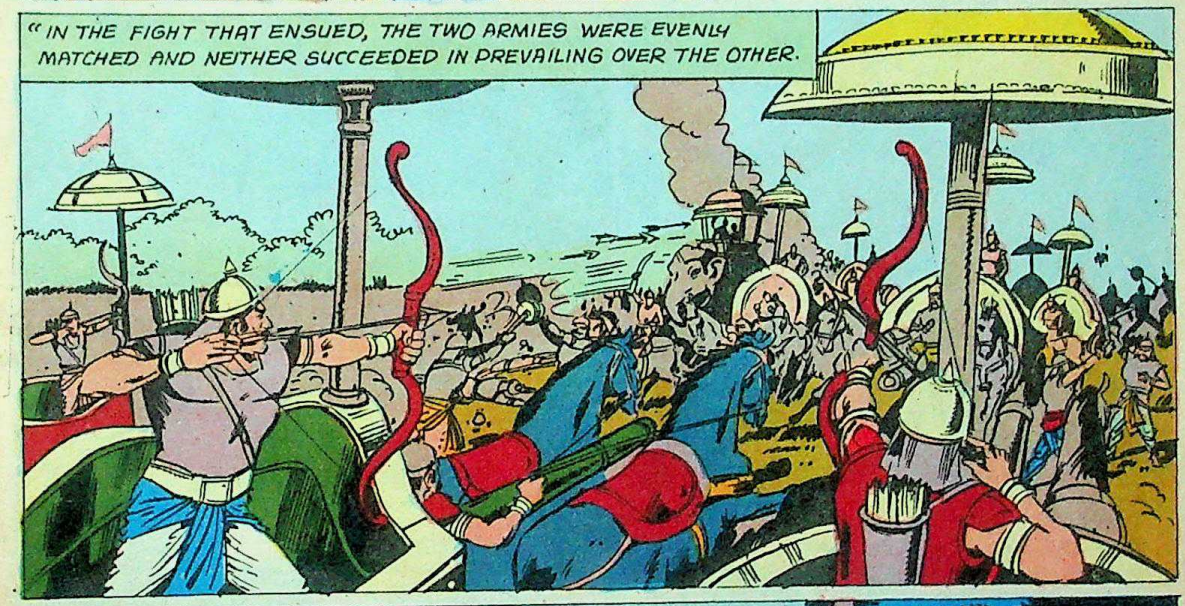

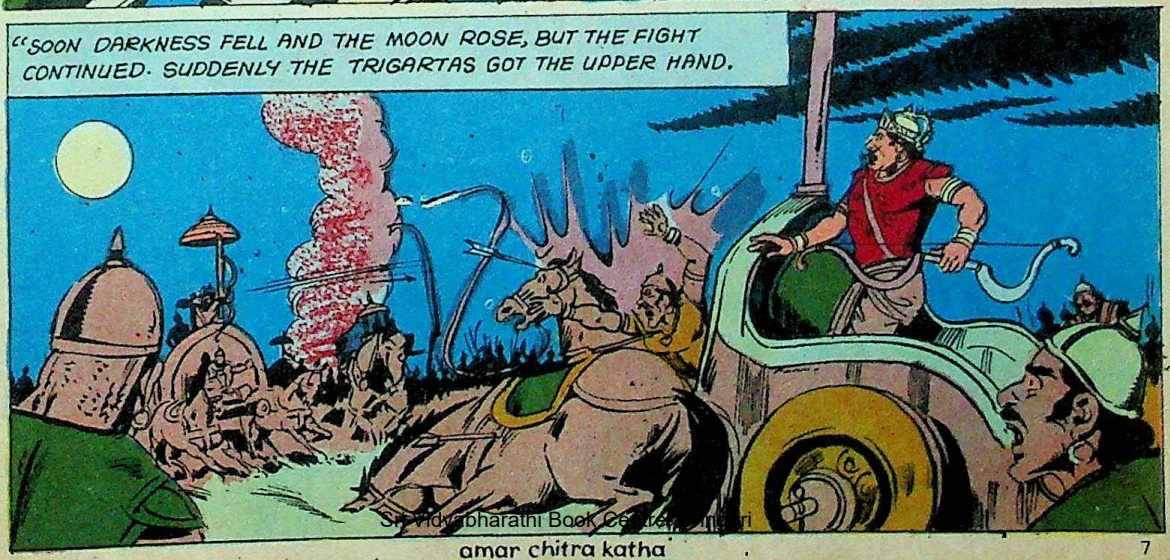

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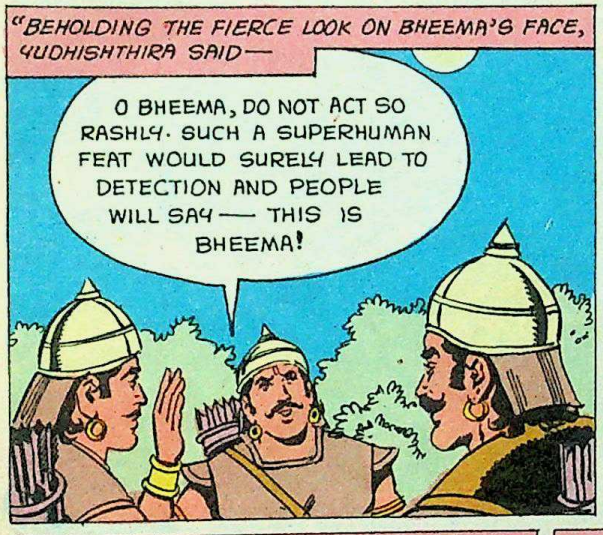

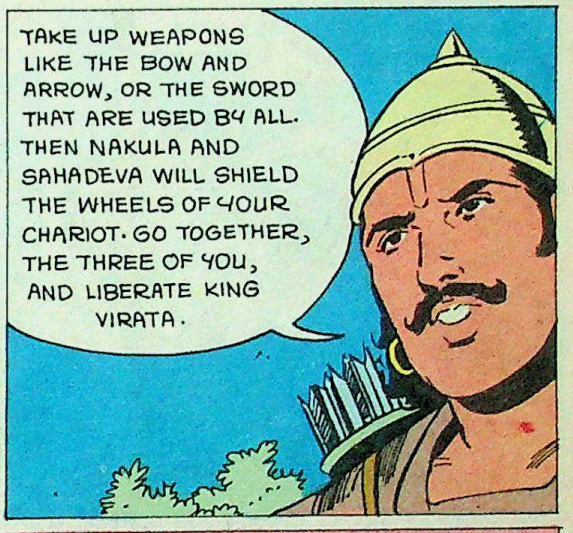

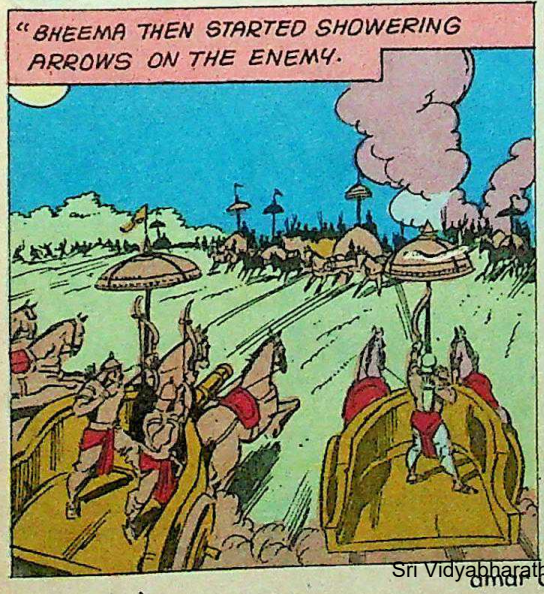

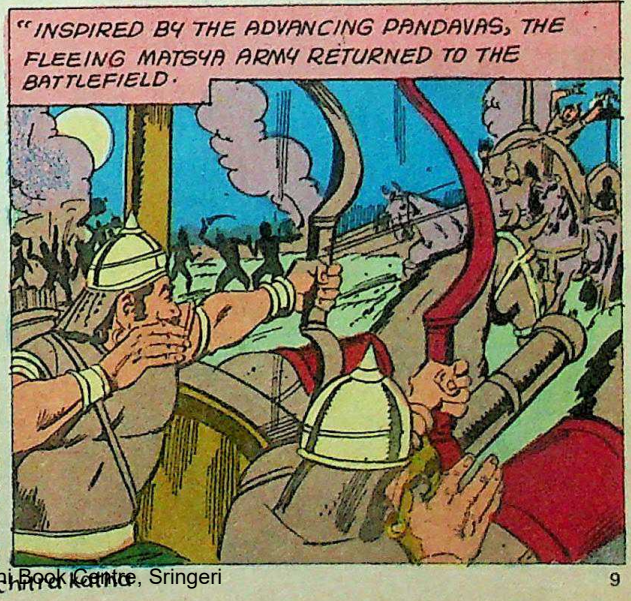

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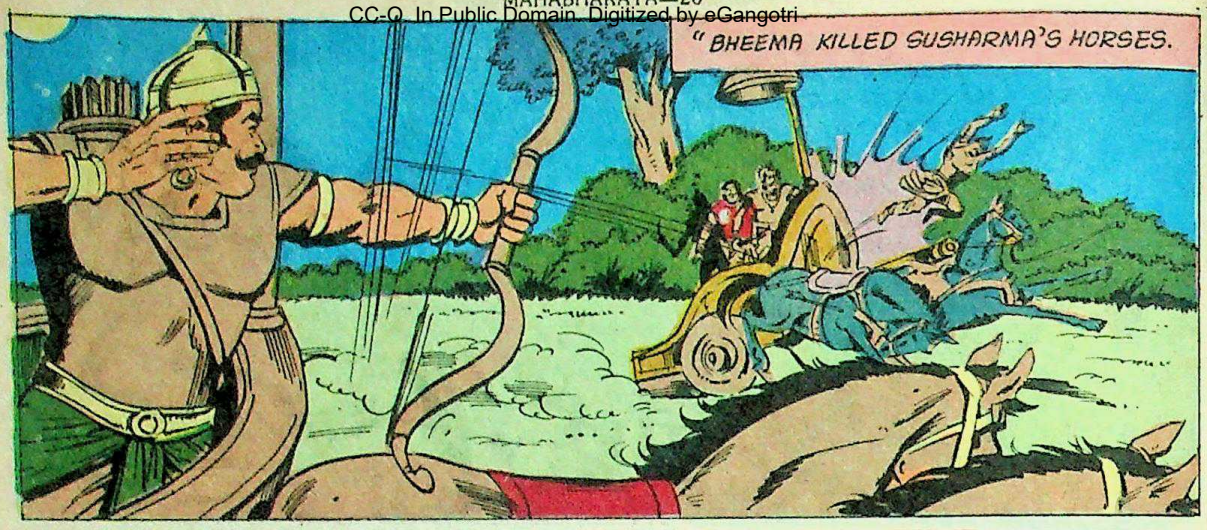

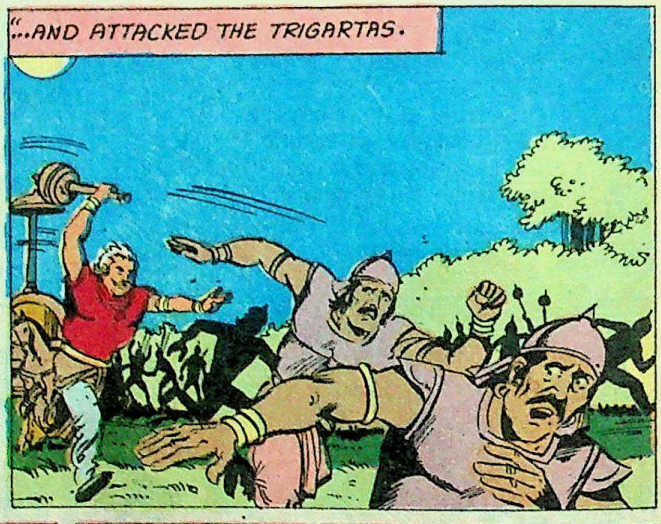

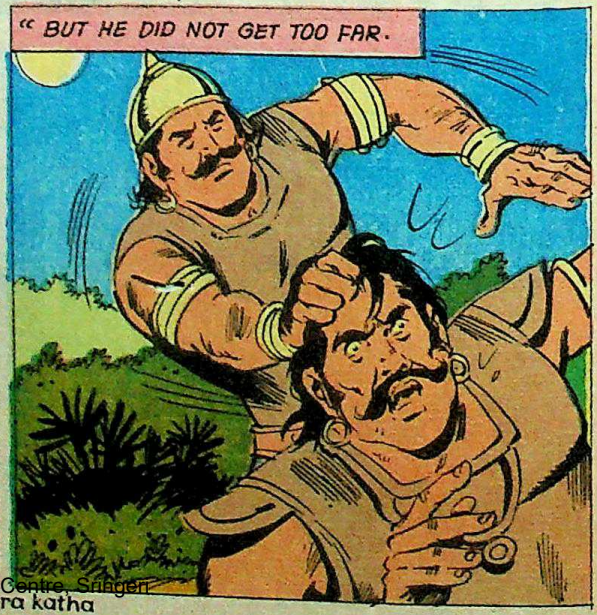

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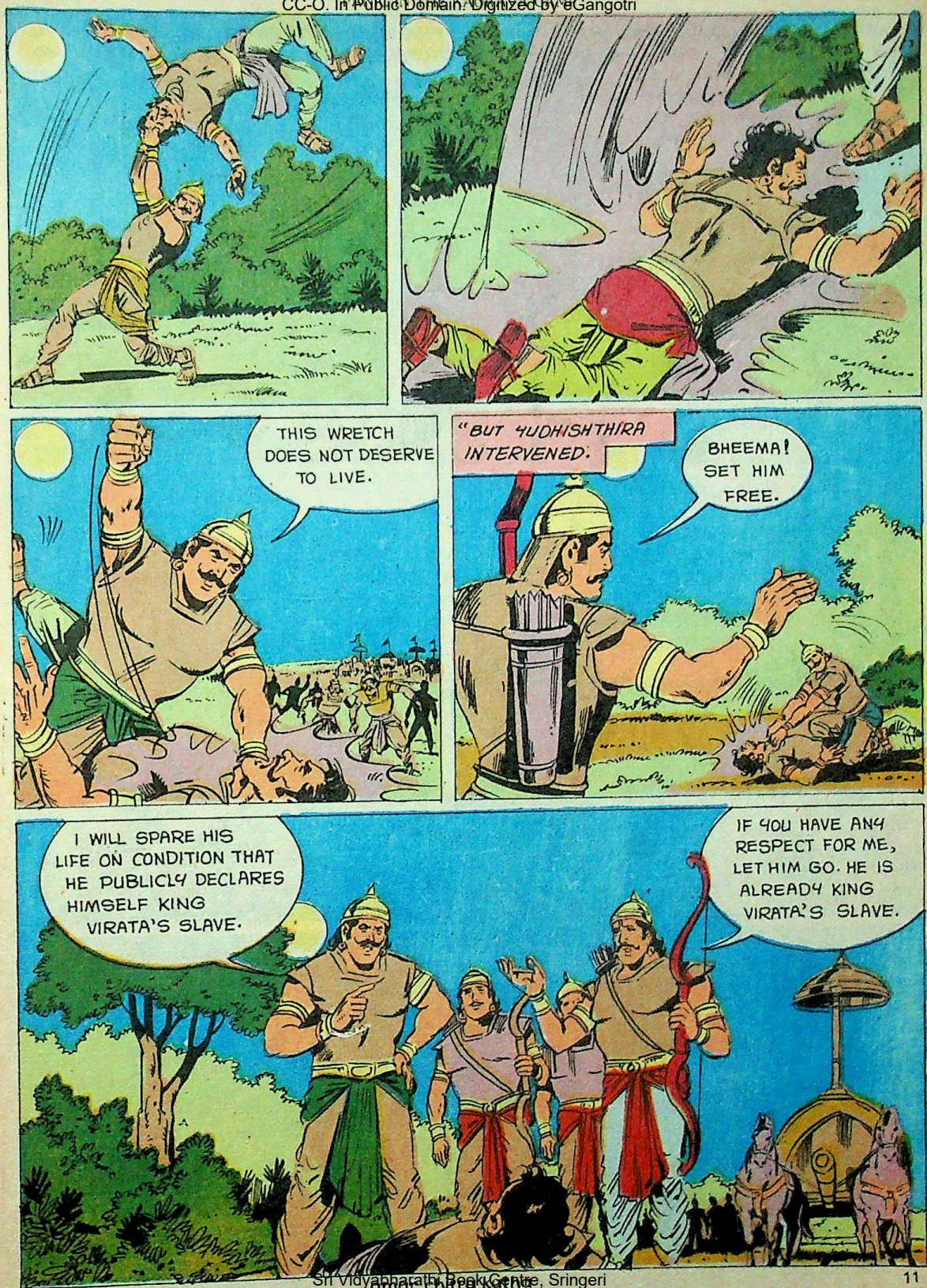

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"TURNING TO SUSHARMA, YUDHISHTHIRA SAID—

GO! YOU ARE FREE. BUT REFRAIN FROM SUCH ACTS IN FUTURE.

"OVERWHELMED WITH SHAME, SUSHARMA PAID HIS RESPECT TO VIRATA AND PROCEEDED TO HIS OWN KINGDOM.

"KING VIRATA THEN ADDRESSED THE PANDAVAS.

YOU HAVE RESCUED ME FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE ENEMY. YOU ARE NOW MASTERS OF MY KINGDOM AND MY WEALTH. KANKA, I WISH TO CROWN YOU KING.

WE ARE HAPPY THAT YOU ARE FREE, O KING. ALL I WISH IS YOUR SAFE ENTRY INTO YOUR CAPITAL AND A HAPPY REUNION WITH YOUR FAMILY.

BUT, O MONARCH, WHILE VIRATA WAS BUSY RECOVERING HIS COWS FROM THE TRIGARTAS, DURYODHANA AND HIS COUNSELLORS INVADED THE MATSYA KINGDOM FROM THE NORTHERN FRONT. AND SIXTY THOUSAND HEAD OF CATTLE WERE LED AWAY.

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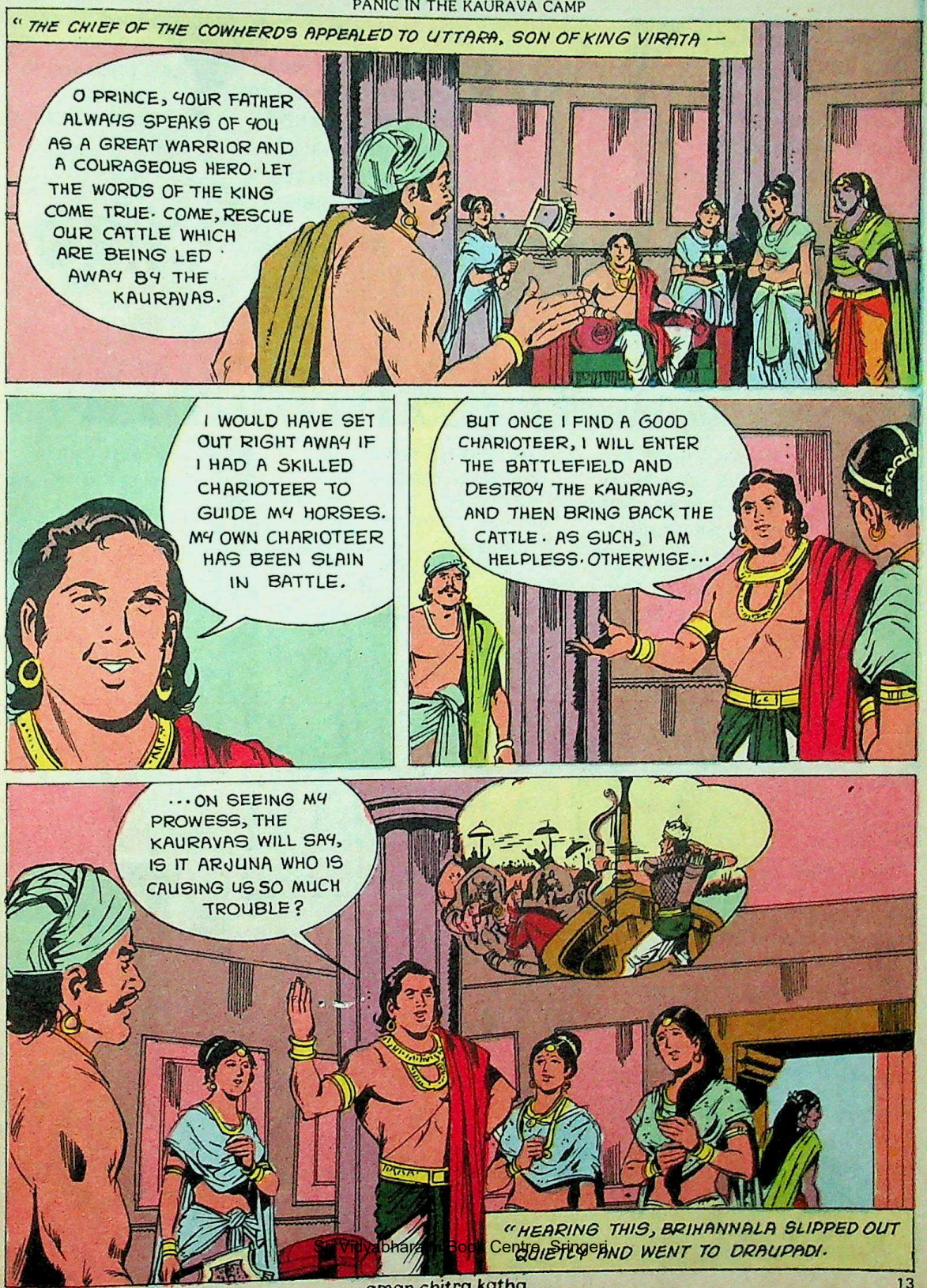

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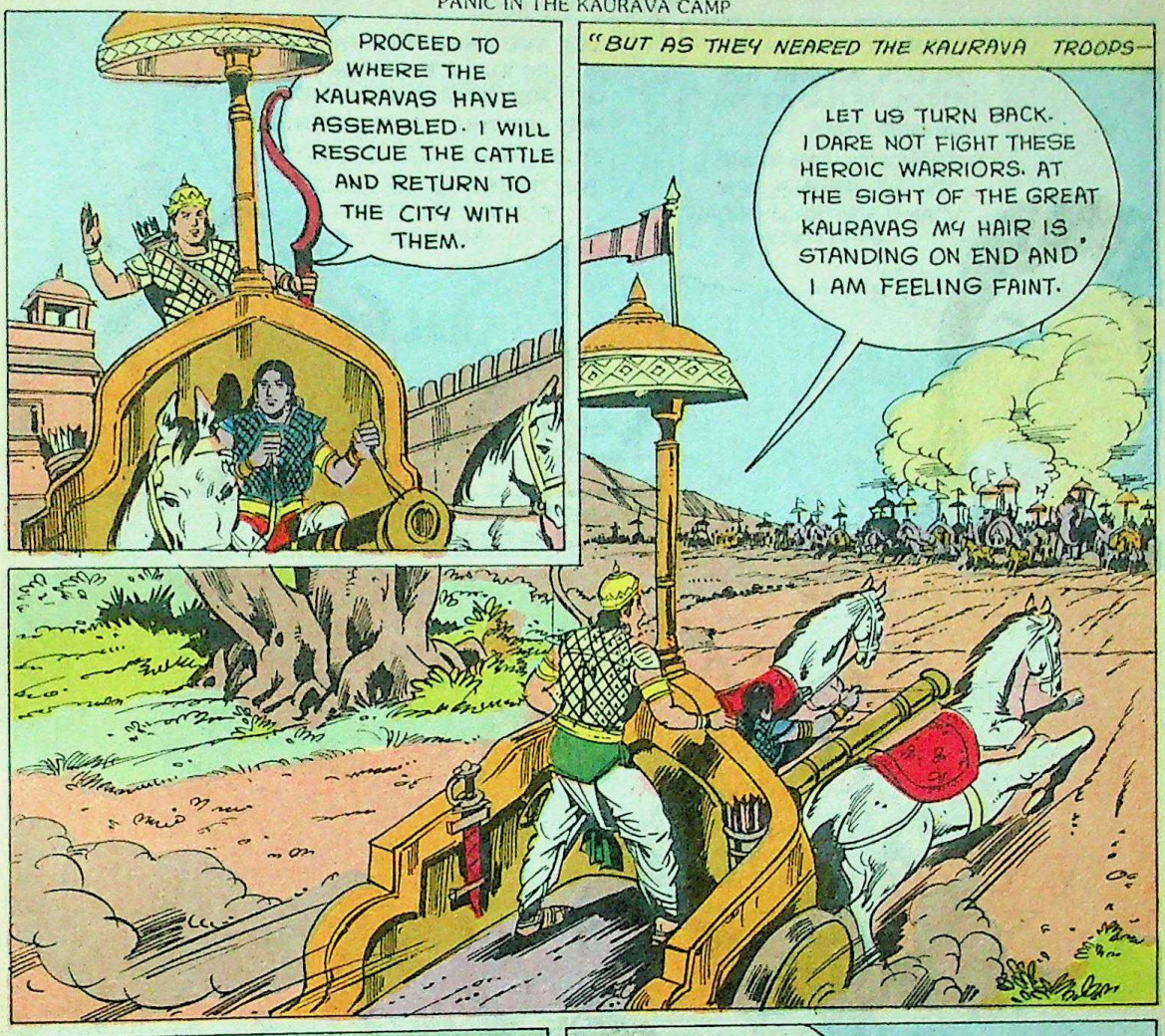

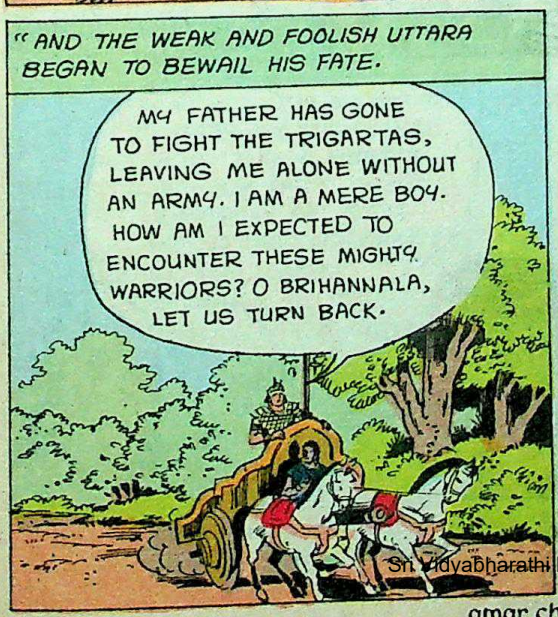

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I CANNOT RETURN TO THE CITY WITHOUT THE CATTLE. AFTER ALL THE PRAISES THAT SAIRANDHRI HAS SUNG ON MY BEHALF, HOW CAN I REFRAIN FROM FIGHTING?

LET THE KAURAVAS TAKE AWAY ALL OF THE MATSYA WEALTH. LET MEN AND WOMEN LAUGH AT ME. LET THE CATTLE PERISH AND THE CITY BE DESERTED. BUT THERE IS NO PLACE FOR ME IN THIS BATTLE.

"SAYING THIS, UTTARA FLUNG HIS BOW AND ARROW AND LEAPT OFF HIS CHARIOT.

"BRIHANNALA FOLLOWED HIM.

RETURN, O PRINCE. THIS IS NOT HOW A BRAVE KSHATRIYA SHOULD BEHAVE. EVEN DEATH IN BATTLE IS BETTER THAN FLIGHT OUT OF FEAR.

HA! HA!

"BRIHANNALA CAUGHT UP WITH UTTARA.

SET ME FREE, BRIHANNALA. I WILL GIVE YOU A HUNDRED GOLD COINS, JEWELS, A CHARIOT AND ALSO TEN ELEPHANTS. BUT SET ME FREE.

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO FIGHT, COME, HOLD THE REINS OF THE HORSES, WHILE I FIGHT THE ENEMY. FEAR NOT. I WILL FIGHT THE KAURAVAS AND RECOVER ALL THE CATTLE.

AND SO THEY PROCEEDED TOWARDS THE SHAMI TREE IN WHICH THE PANDAVAS HAD HIDDEN THEIR WEAPONS.

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Subject _____
School _____

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A nectar-sipping bird. It hovers like a helicopter near a flower, its wings beating more than 40 times per second.

MAGGI 2-Minute noodles

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SCREECH OWL
A night bird, the owl searches for food in the dark. Its large wing span makes its flight very silent.

MAGGI 2-Minute noodles

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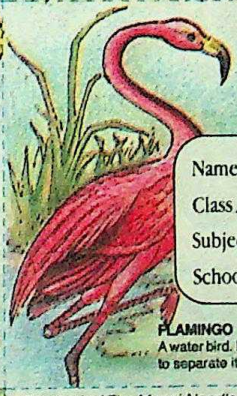
School _____

WOODPECKER
This colourful bird has a hard bony beak with which it pecks the bark of trees for insects and worms.



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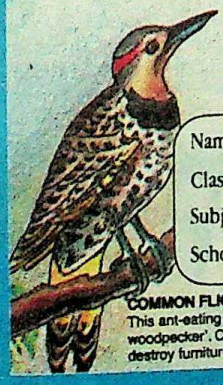
FLAMINGO
A water bird. Its bill has a special filter mechanism to separate its food from the waste.



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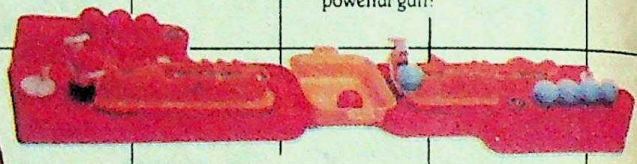
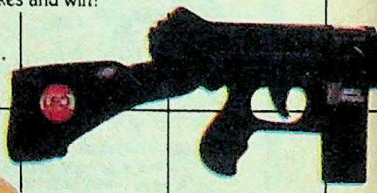
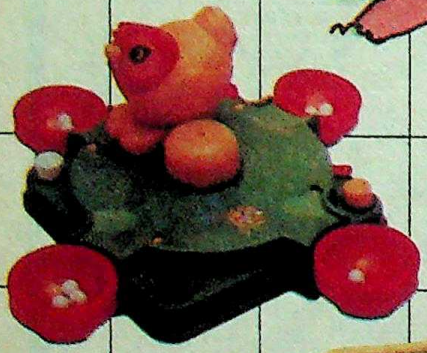
Auto Rifle
5-12 years
Win every battle with this big, powerful gun!



Carry-On Chef
5 years upward
Move your chef carefully. Help him get more cakes and win!

Lay-An-Egg
7 years upward
Tap the button quick, quick, and capture the most eggs!
Battery-operated.





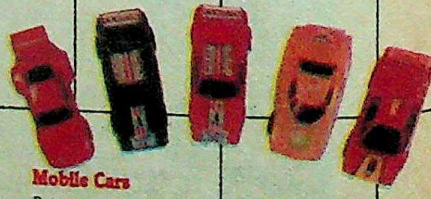
Beach Craft
2-5 years
Friction-powered plane with an engine that really moves. You'll be a real ace pilot!

Dare Devil
2-5 years
Friction-powered fire engine. Be a fearless fire-fighter!

Racing Rover
3 years upward
Pull-apart friction-powered jeep. Roar off into the countryside. Go exploring!

Falcon
3 years upward
Pull-back action. Up, up, and away! Fly off to new and exciting places!

Land Cruiser
3 years upward
Battery-operated jeep with bump-and-go action. The antenna lights up—and off you go!



Mobile Cars
3 years upward
Scaled-down models of famous sports cars. Zip! Zip! Zip! There they go!

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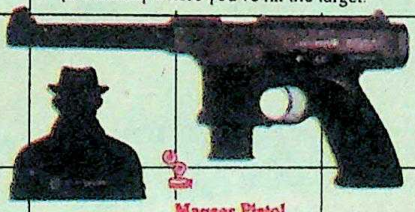
Come join the Uncle Leo Club!

Flying Discs
6 years upward
Send your Flying Disc shooting beyond the moon and stars!

Shoot-Out Gun
5 years upward
Pow! Pow! Super-sticking darts show you exactly where you've hit the target.



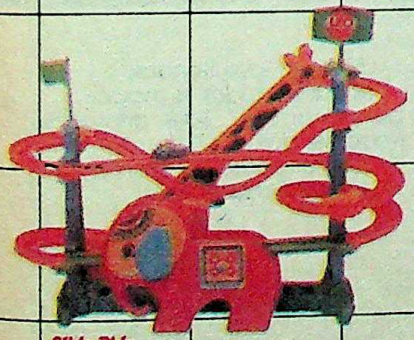
Mauser Pistol
8 years upward
Realistic model of the famous Mauser Pistol!

Auto Pistol
4-10 years
Rapid firing action. Swing it up and shoot! You're a one-man army!

Mail Van
3-9 years
Write a letter to your friend..... then take it yourself in your Mail Van!

Fighter Jet
3 years upward
Pull-back mechanism. Go! Go! Go! Take off for battle!

Martini Porsche
3 years upward
Battery-operated sports car with touch 'n' turn action. Whee! You're the fastest on the road!



Slide Ride
4 years upward
Battery-operated roller coaster. Cars go up and down, round and round ... real fast!

Chook-Chook Train
3 years upward
Battery-operated train set. All line clear! Here comes the superfast express!

Bull's Eye Gun
7 years upward
Aim carefully ... shoot! Congrats — you've got the target!

Flying Saucer Gun
5 years upward
Shoots tiny flying saucers. Go into space ... be a star wars hero!

Get any Leo toy, and you can become a member of the Uncle Leo Club. Hurry! Because you'll get one year's membership free, if yours is one of the first 25,000 applications received!

A child's best friends!

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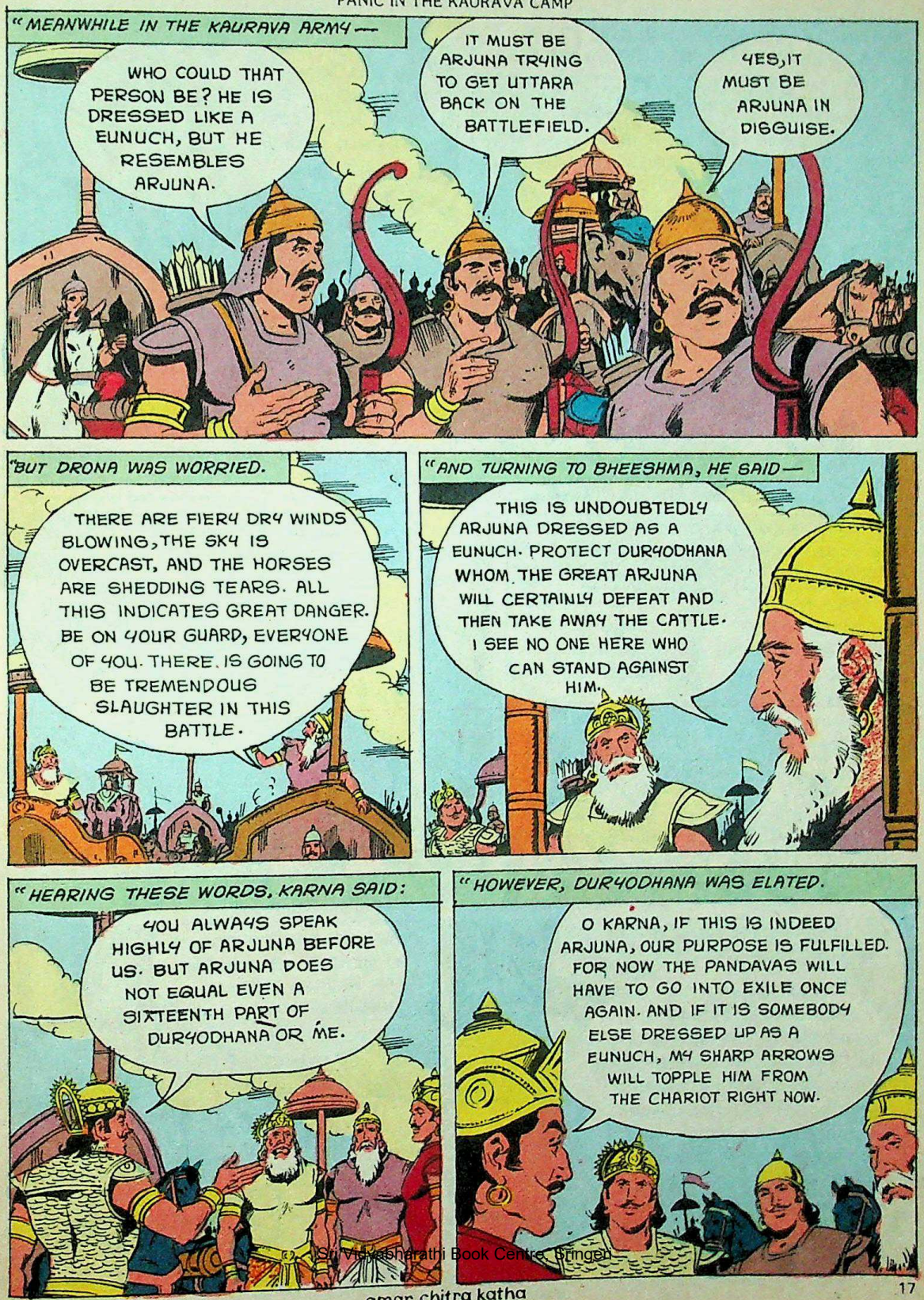

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"MEANWHILE BRIHANNALA HAD COME TO THE SHAMI TREE IN WHICH THE WEAPONS HAD BEEN HIDDEN.

CLIMB UP THIS TREE AND BRING DOWN THE BOWS THAT ARE KEPT THERE.

WHAT BOWS? THAT IS A CORPSE! I WILL BE DEFILED IF I TOUCH IT.

DO NOT FEAR. YOU WILL REMAIN CLEAN AND UNPOLLUTED. IT IS NOT A CORPSE. IT ONLY LOOKS LIKE ONE.

"UTTARA CLIMBED UP THE SHAMI TREE AND BROUGHT DOWN THE WEAPONS.

"BUT UTTARA COULD NOT HOLD BACK HIS SURPRISE WHEN HE REMOVED THE LEAFY COVERING ON THE WEAPONS—

WEAPONS! TO WHOM DO THESE EXCELLENT WEAPONS BELONG? TELL ME TRUTHFULLY, O BRIHANNALA.

THESE WEAPONS BELONG TO THE MIGHTY PANDAVAS.

BUT WHERE ARE THE BRILLIANT SONS OF PANDU TO WHOM THESE WEAPONS BELONG? WHERE IS THEIR WIFE DRAUPADI?

"BRIHANNALA EXPLAINED TO HIM.

I AM ARJUNA. KANKA, YOUR FATHER'S COURTIER, IS YUDHISHTHIRA AND THE COOK BALLAVA, BHEEMA. GRANTHIKA IS NAKULA, VIRATA'S ROYAL GROOM AND TANTIPALA IS SAHADEVA IN CHARGE OF THE COW-PEN. DRAUPADI IS IN THE DISGUISE OF THE QUEEN'S SAIRANDHRI.

O ARJUNA, I AM FORTUNATE TO BEHOLD YOU. FORGIVE MY HAVING SAID UNSEEMLY THINGS TO YOU.

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"MOUNTING THE CHARIOT, UTTARA SAID—

I AM REASSURED NOW. I WILL BE YOUR CHARIOTEER. COMMAND ME AND I WILL DRIVE YOU WHEREVER YOU WISH. GIVE ME YOUR BLESSINGS.

"REPLACING HIS BROTHERS' WEAPONS, ARJUNA TOOK UP HIS OWN.

"THEN HE TOOK OFF HIS BRACELETS AND WORE A PAIR OF GOLD GLOVES. TYING BACK HIS LOCKS WITH A PIECE OF WHITE CLOTH, HE GOT ON TO THE CHARIOT.

DO NOT FEAR. I WILL FIGHT THE KAURAVAS AND RECOVER THE CATTLE.

"AND AS THEY DROVE AHEAD TOWARDS THE KAURAVA ARMY, ARJUNA BLEW HIS CONCH SHELL, DEVADATTA.

"HEARING THIS, DURYODHANA EXCLAIMED GLEEFULLY—

IT IS ARJUNA! THE PANDAVAS HAVE FAILED TO KEEP THEIR PLEDGE. THEY WILL HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE FOREST FOR ANOTHER TWELVE YEARS.

"BUT BHEESHMA INTERVENED—

THE THIRTEENTH YEAR ENDED FIVE MONTHS AND TWELVE DAYS AGO.* IT IS FOR YOU NOW, O DURYODHANA, TO MAKE PEACE OR WAR ON ARJUNA, WHOSE ARRIVAL IS IMMINENT.

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* ACCORDING TO THE LUNAR CALENDAR. EVEN ACCORDING TO THE SOLAR CALENDAR THE THIRTEENTH

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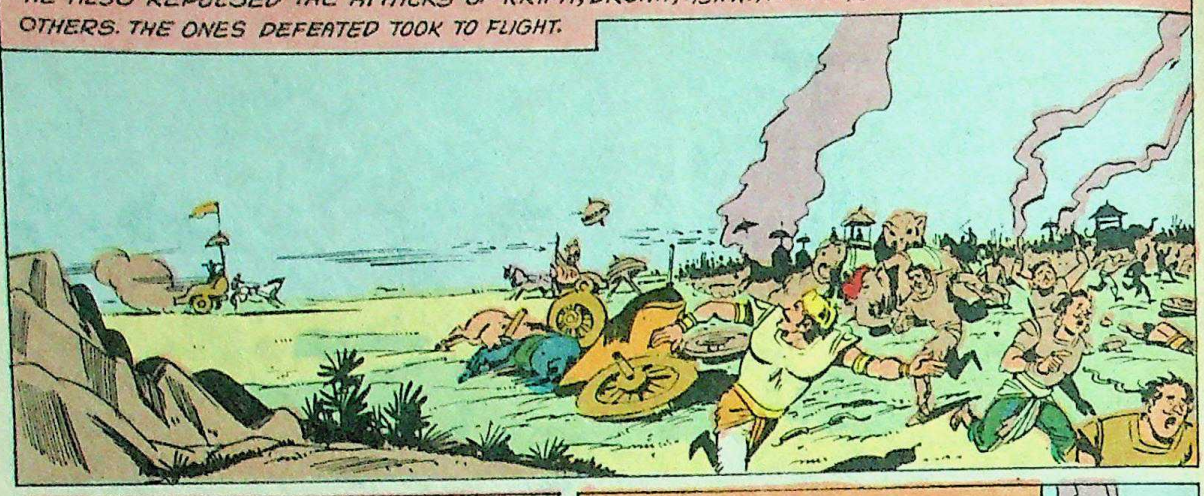
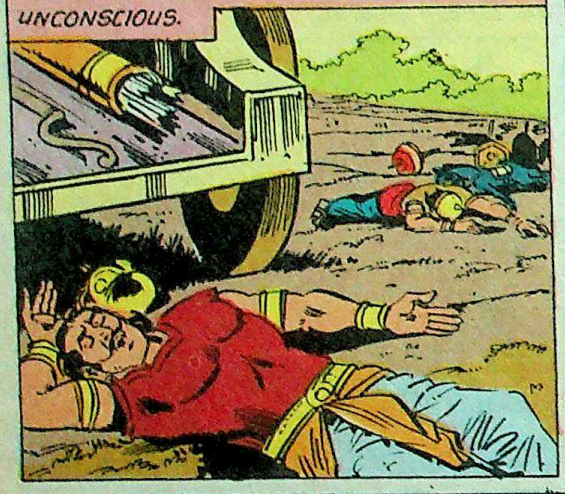
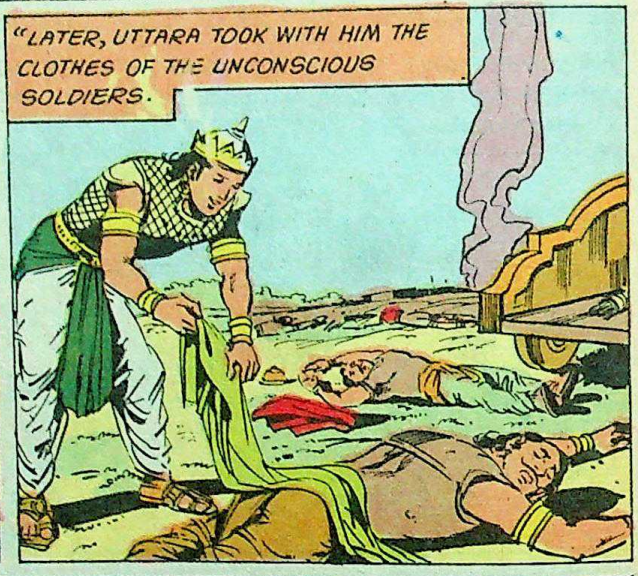
"HE ALSO REPULSED THE ATTACKS OF KRIPA, DRONA, ASHWATTHAMA, BHEESHMA AND THE OTHERS. THE ONES DEFEATED TOOK TO FLIGHT.

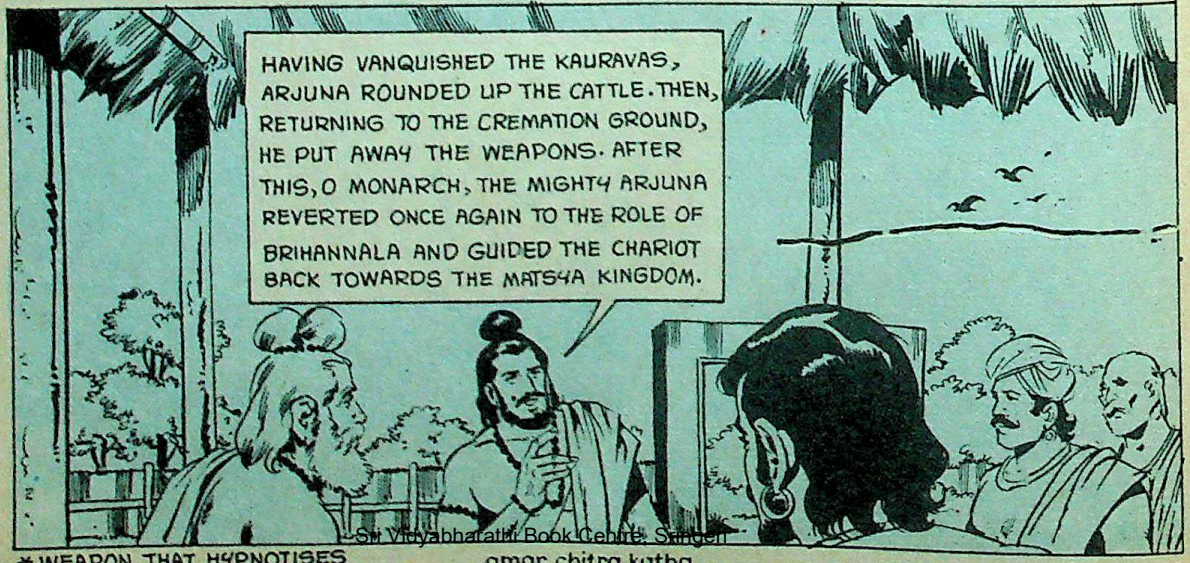


"ARJUNA THEN USED THE SAMMOHANA* WEAPON AND THE REMAINING ARMY FELL UNCONSCIOUS.



"LATER, UTTARA TOOK WITH HIM THE CLOTHES OF THE UNCONSCIOUS SOLDIERS.





*WEAPON THAT HYPNOTISES

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"MEANWHILE, KING VIRATA, HAVING VANQUISHED THE TRIGARTAS, RETURNED TO THE CAPITAL AMIDST GREAT REJOICING.

HAIL!

HAIL!

BUT WHERE IS UTTARA?

O KING, THE KURUS ATTACKED US FROM THE NORTHERN FRONT. THE BRAVE UTTARA SET FORTH WITH BRIHANNALA TO RESCUE THE CATTLE.

"VIRATA WAS ANXIOUS.

SELECT THOSE FROM AMONG MY SOLDIERS WHO ARE NOT WOUNDED AND SEND THEM FORTH TO HELP UTTARA.

"BUT YUDHISHTHIRA SAID—

BRIHANNALA HAS ACCOMPANIED THE PRINCE, YOU NEED HAVE NO FEAR. THEY WILL SURELY RETURN SUCCESSFUL.

"JUST THEN—

O LORD, THE KURUS HAVE BEEN DEFEATED! UTTARA AND BRIHANNALA ARE RETURNING WITH THE CATTLE.

THE NEWS IS NOT SURPRISING! WITH BRIHANNALA FOR A CHARIOTEER...

"KING VIRATA, HOWEVER, WAS OVERJOYED.

DECORATE THE HIGHWAYS. MUSICIANS AND DANCERS SHOULD RECEIVE THE PRINCE. HE MUST BE GIVEN A FITTING WELCOME.

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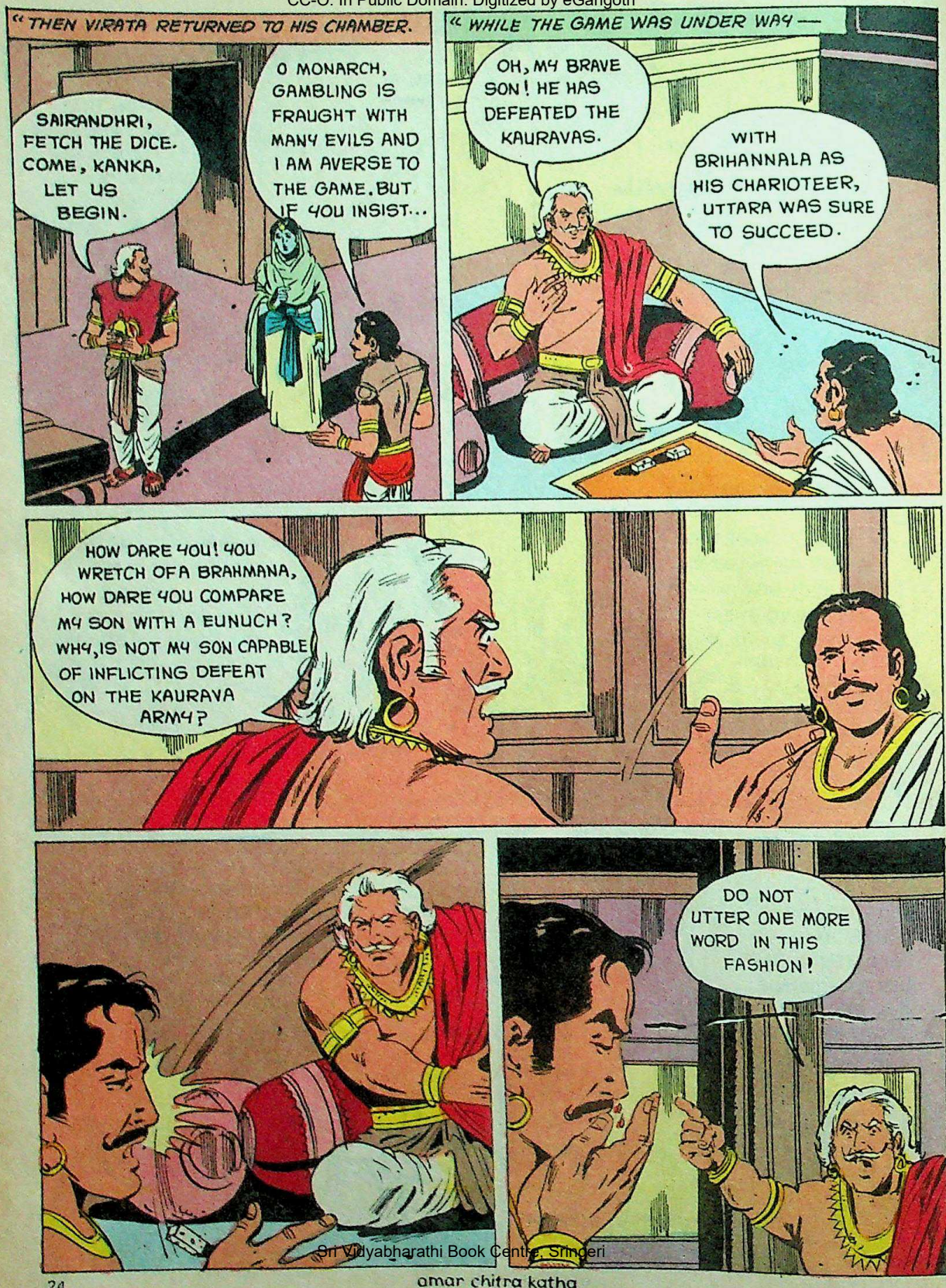

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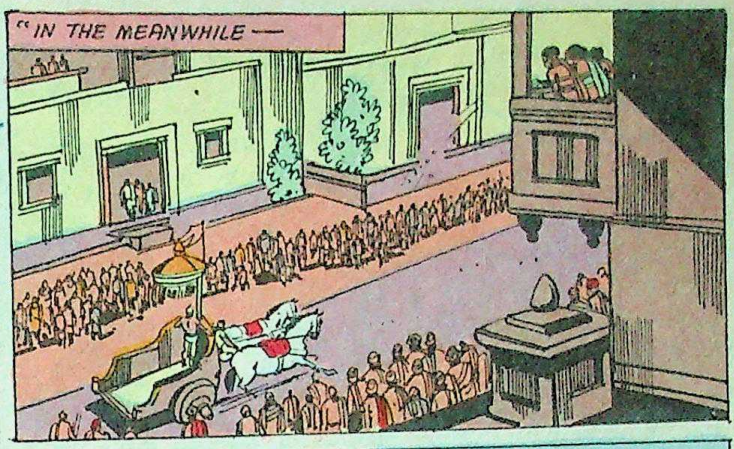

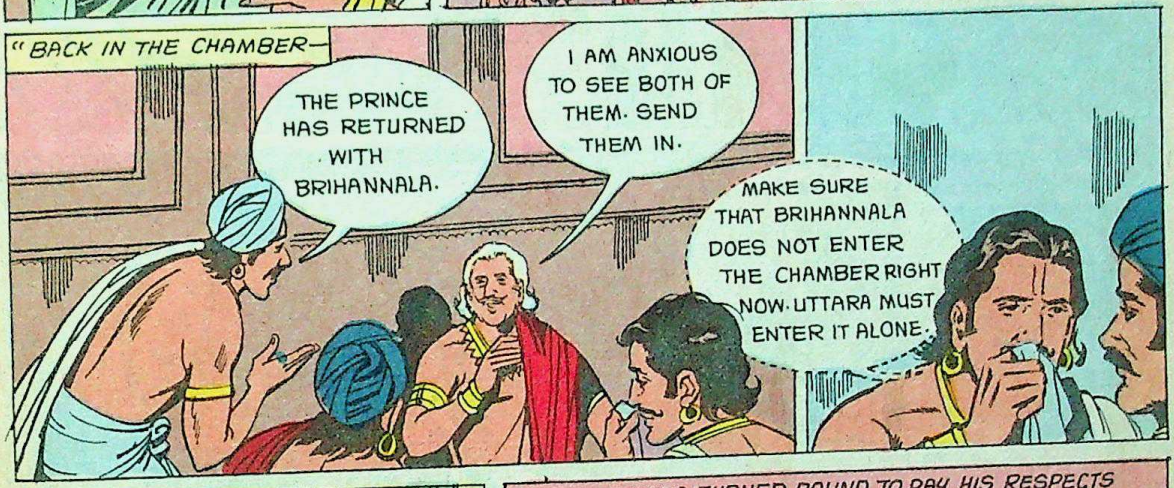

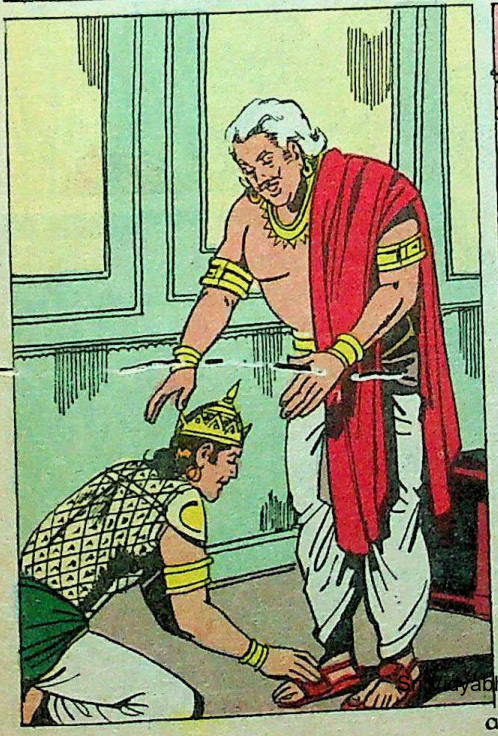

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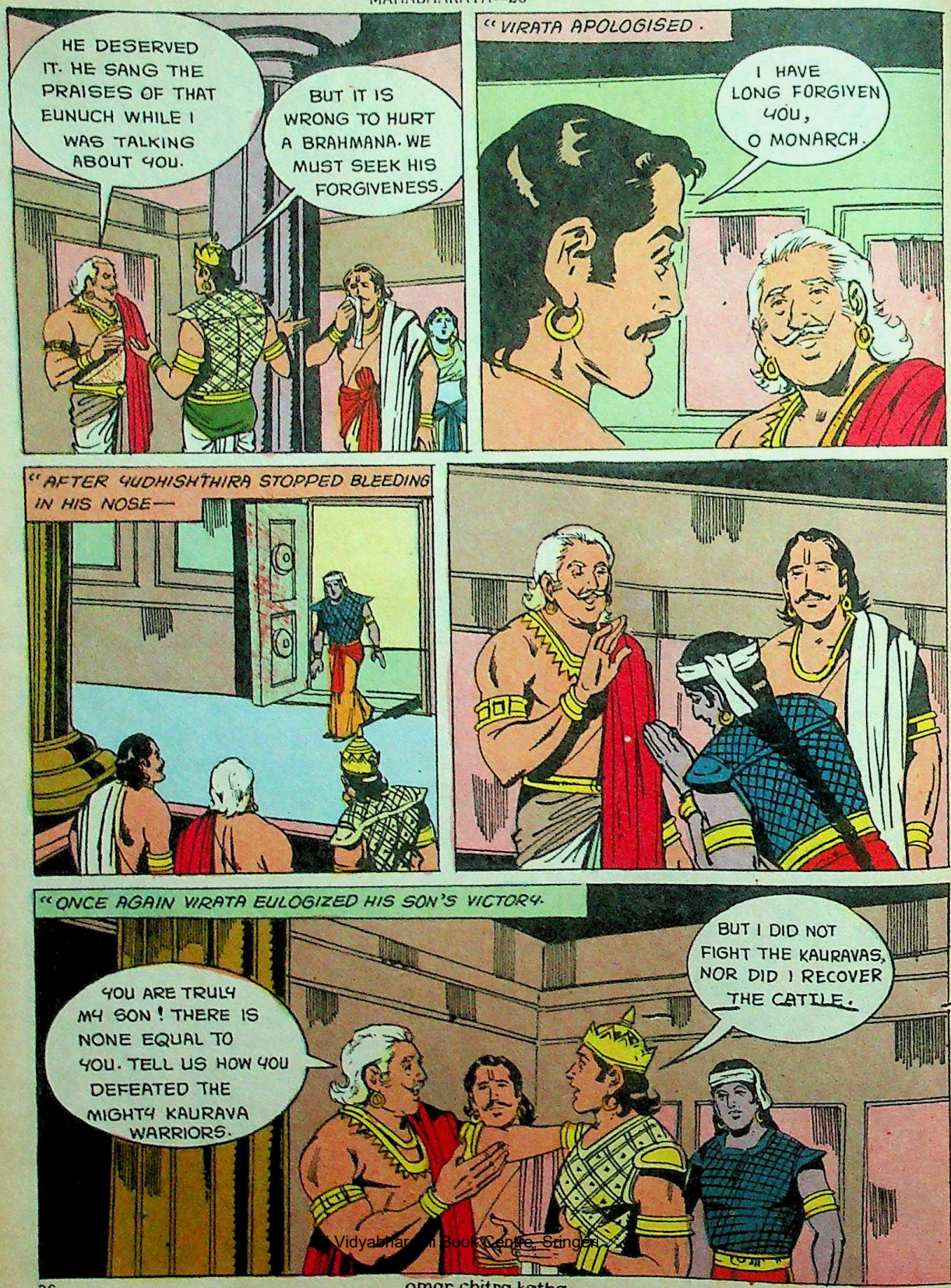

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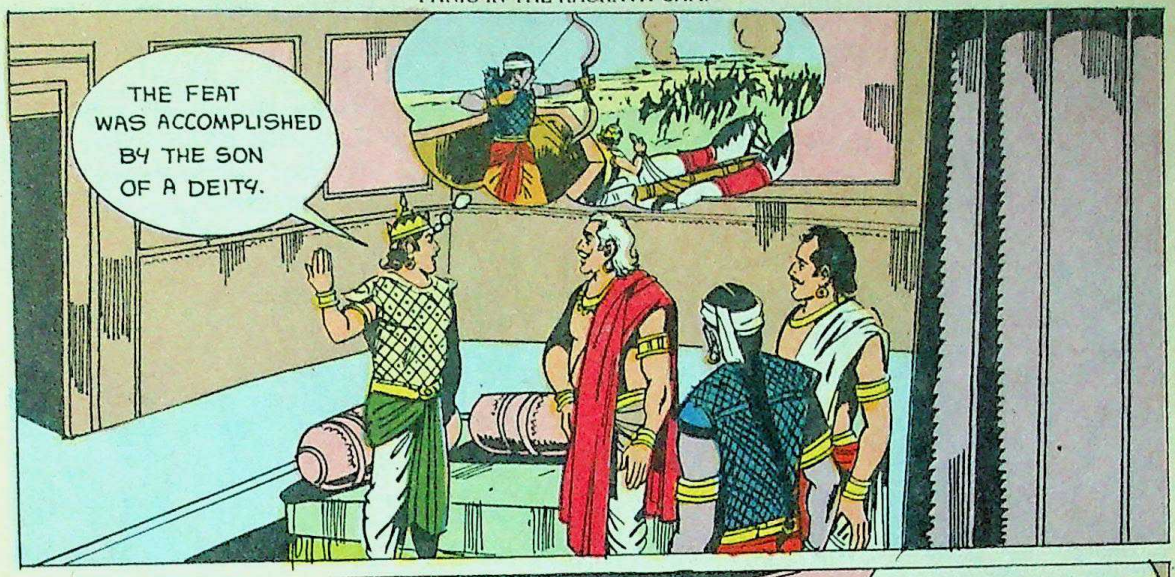

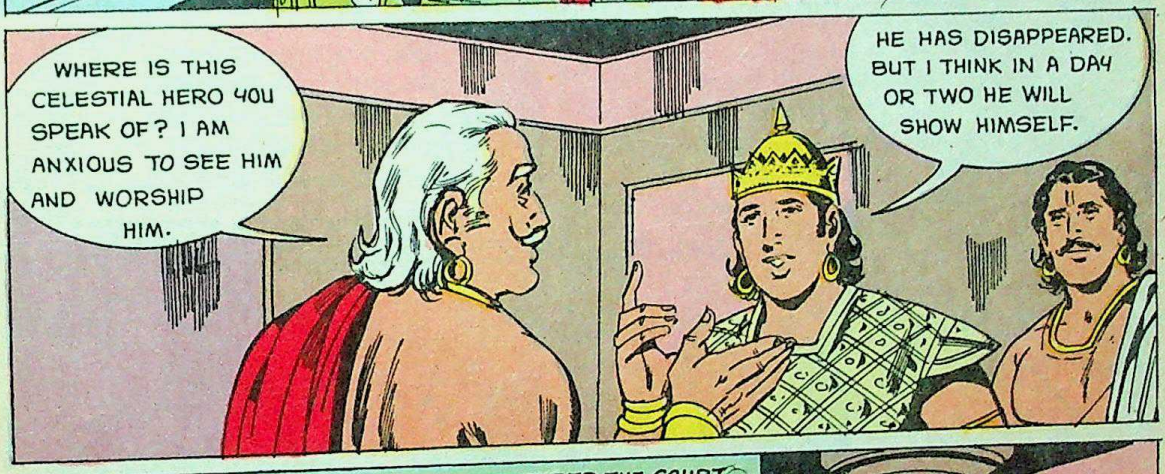

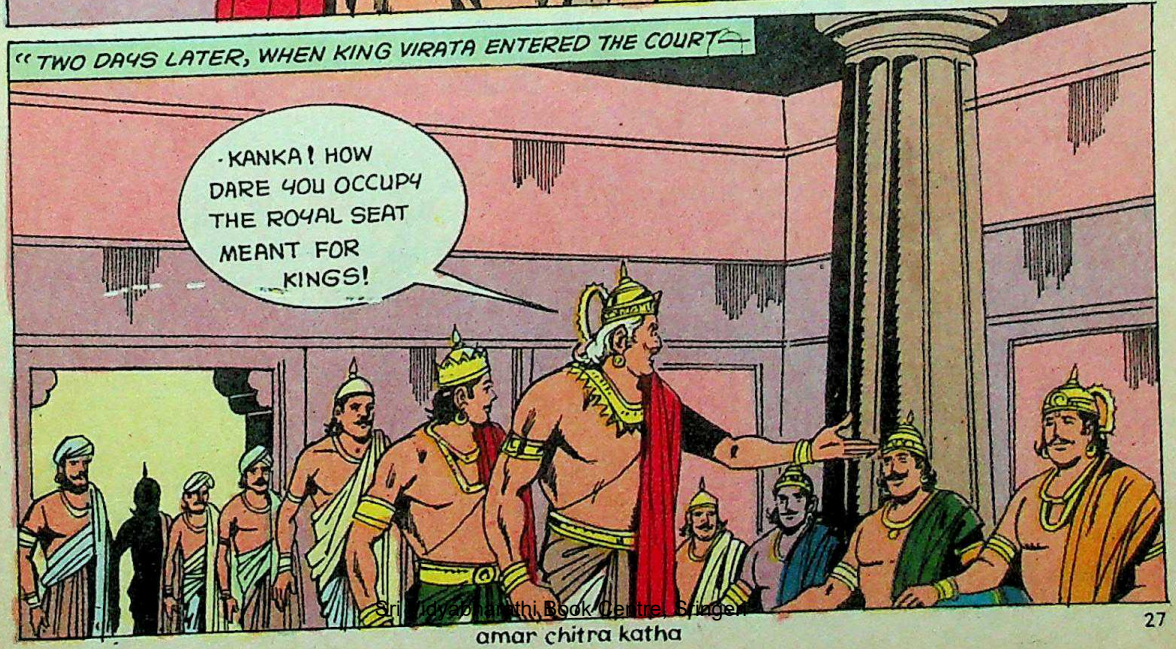

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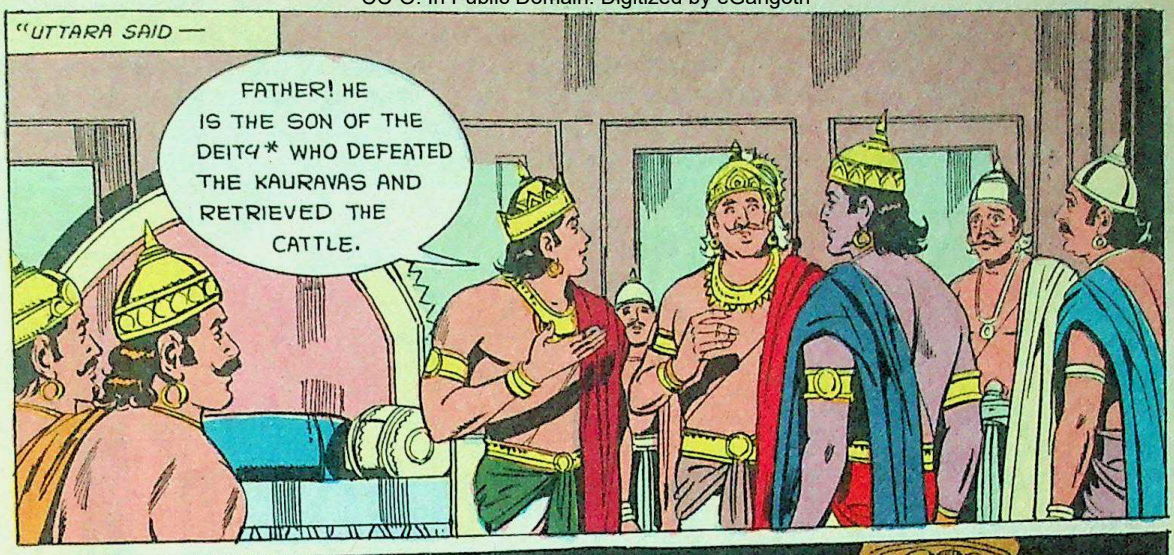

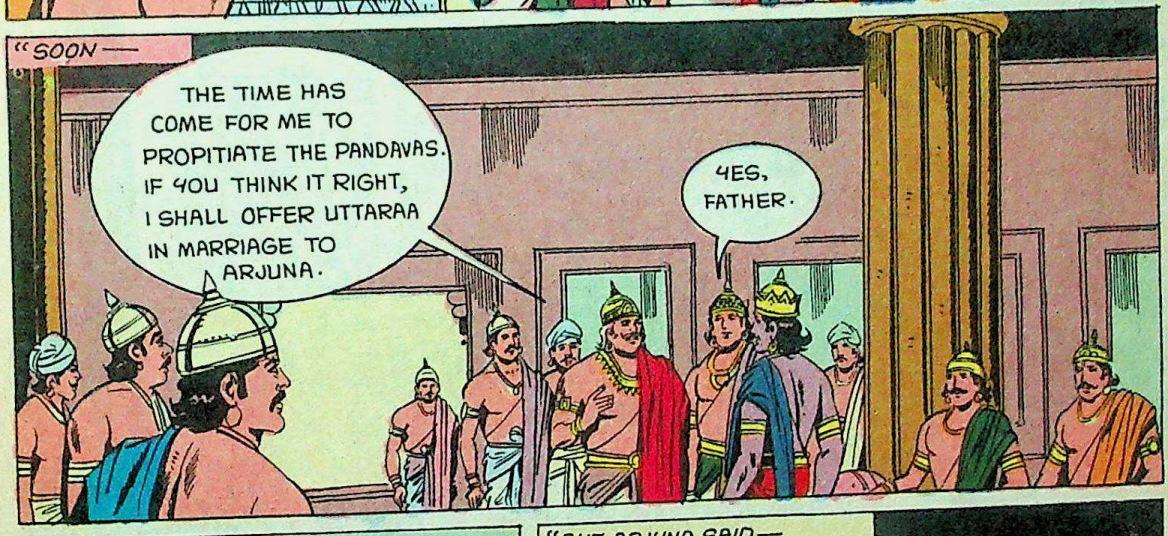

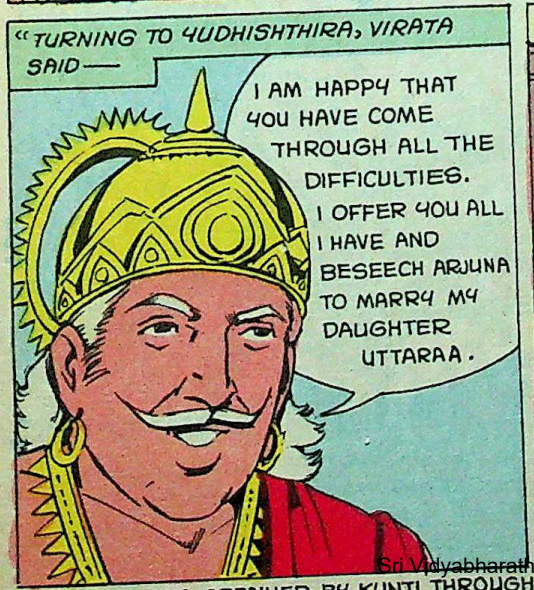

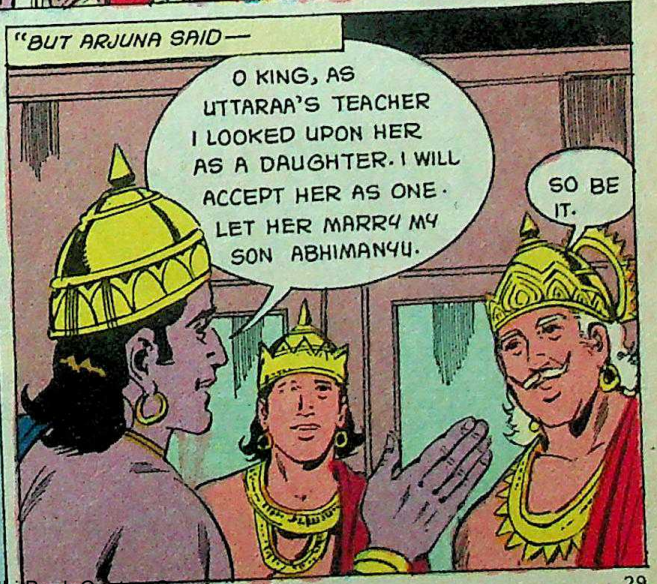

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* ARJUNA WAS OBTAINED BY KUNTI THROUGH THE BLESSING OF INDRA.

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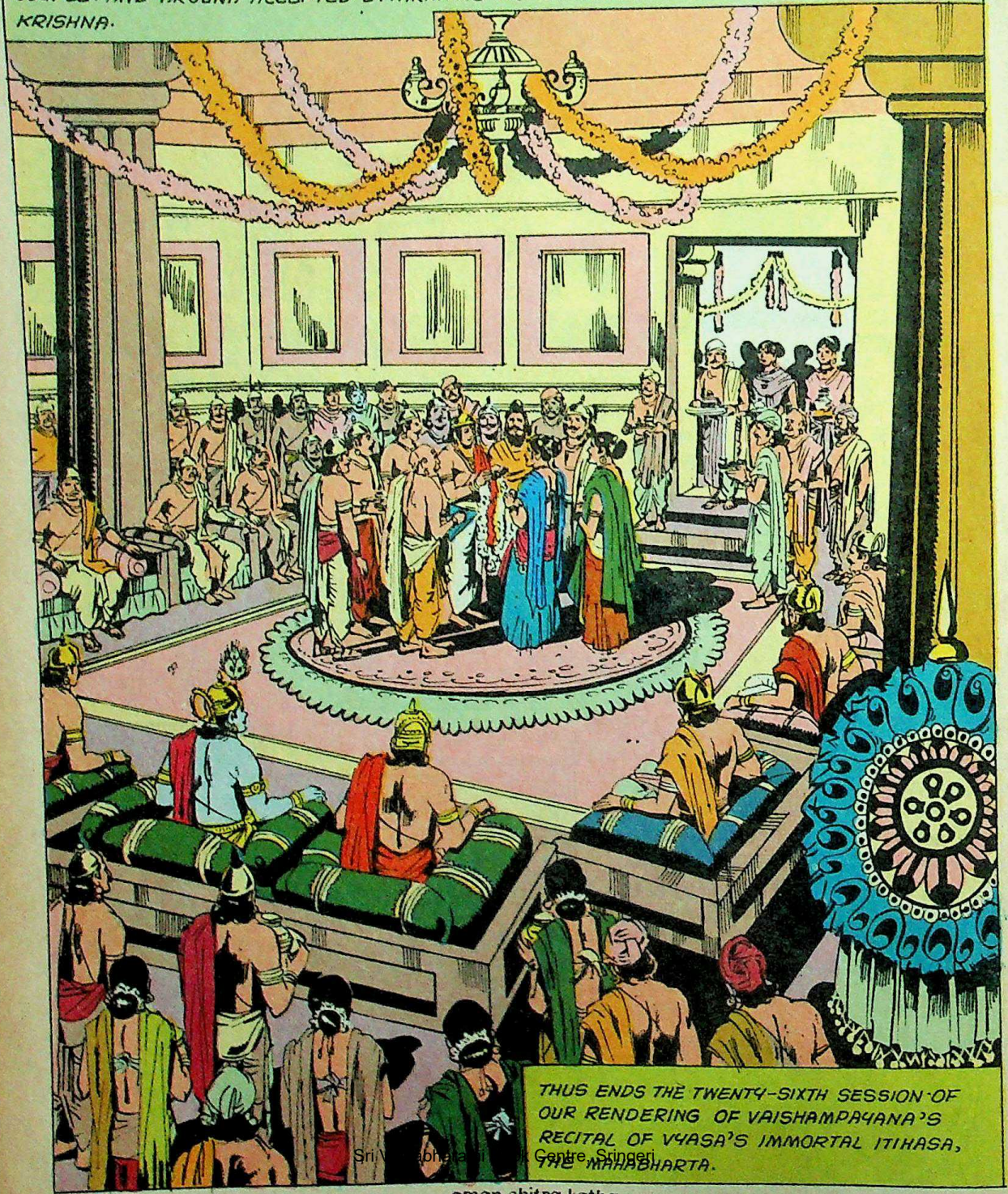
"THE PANDAVAS THEN TOOK UP THEIR ABODE IN THE MATSYA TOWN OF UPAPLAVYA. ABHIMANYU WAS SENT FOR. AND ON THE DAY OF THE WEDDING, GUESTS POURED IN FROM ALL DIRECTIONS. THE KING OF KASHI, THE MIGHTY DRUPADA, THE INVINCIBLE DHRISHTADYUMNA AND SEVERAL BRAHMANAS CAME. KRISHNA ALSO CAME WITH A HUGE RETINUE TO GIVE HIS BLESSINGS TO THE COUPLE. AND ARJUNA ACCEPTED UTTARAA AS HIS DAUGHTER-IN-LAW IN THE PRESENCE OF KRISHNA.



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Sri Vidyabha

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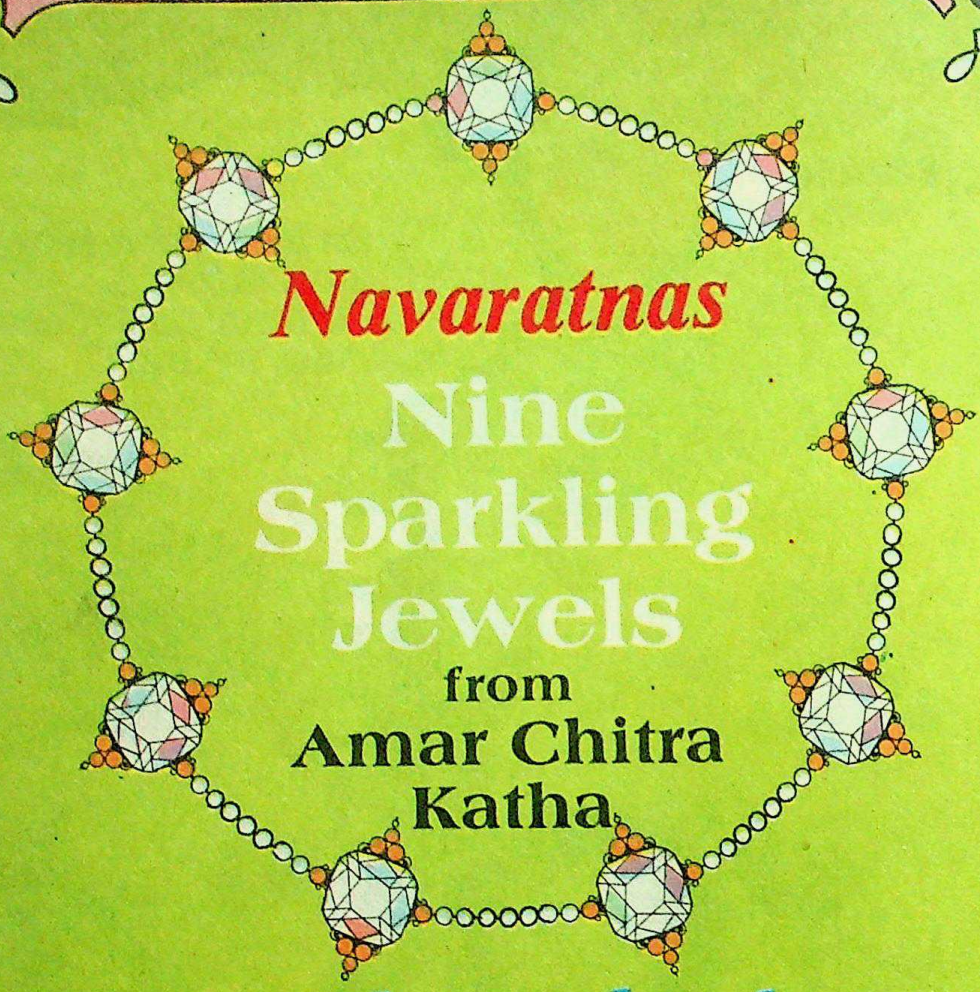

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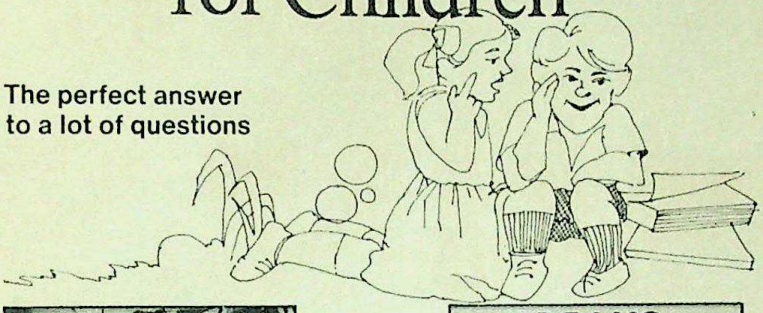

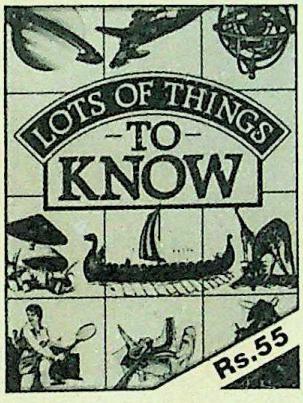

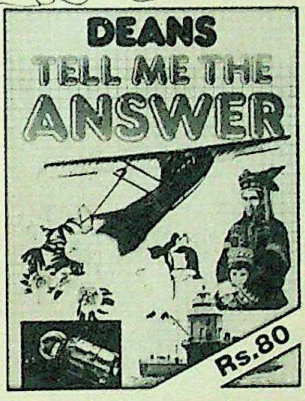

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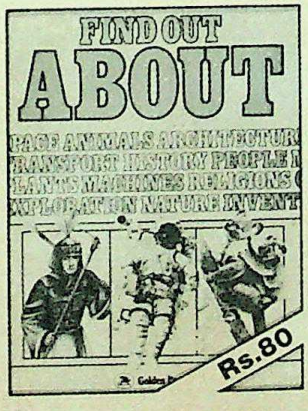

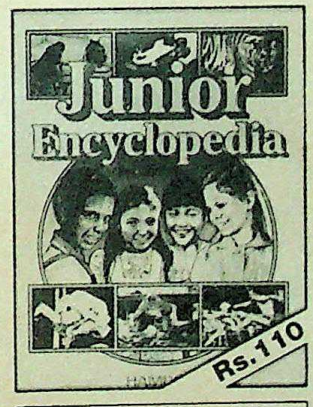

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